

## Bullying

Thompson School District has systematically responded to Bullying since the 1990s. Very important to keep in mind is that bullying is a complex issue that requires multiple layers of responding. The latest research shows that if we want to create a safe environment for all students, we need to focus upon 4 main areas:

- Create a positive school setting (PBIS, Bully Busters and Bucket Filling)
- Increase awareness about bullying among all educators, staff, students, and families
- Enforce school anti-bullying rules; provide enhanced supervision in bully-prone locations
- Teach students skills to deal with bullying, problem solving, and making friends. (specific strategies to respond to bullying for the victim and bystander, respecting differences, conflict management/problem solving, empathy training, friendship skills)

There is often a misconception between Bullying and Normal conflict.  
Table 1 below shows the key differences.

<b>NORMAL PEER CONFLICT</b>	<b>BULLYING</b>
Equal power or friends	Imbalance of Power; not friends
Happens Occasionally	Repeated Negative Actions
Accidental	Purposeful
Not Serious	Serious with threat of physical or emotional harm
Equal Emotional Reaction	Strong emotional reaction from victim and little or no emotional reaction from bully
Not seeking power or attention	Seeking power, control, or material things
Not trying to get something	Attempt to gain material things or power
Remorse—will take responsibility	No remorse—blames victim
Effort to solve the problem	No effort to solve the problem

Our anti-bullying goals as a district PBIS team are to create a positive school setting, increase awareness about bullying among all educators, staff, students, and families; enforce school anti-bullying rules; provide enhanced supervision in bully-prone locations; and teach students skills to deal with bullying, problem solving, and making friends.

## Bullying Response Tips

- Listen to your child and encourage him or her to tell you when bullying has taken place.
- If your child is a witness to bullying, he or she should not join in or laugh at it.
- Talk with your child about bullying and the strategies he or she has already tried. Remind your child to stay calm and confident and to use positive self-talk.
- Monitor your child's internet and cell phone use and encourage him or her to inform you if others are sending inappropriate messages.
- Model and discuss non-aggressive ways to resolve problems or conflicts. Don't tell your child to fight back.
- Help and encourage your child to develop friendships. Children with friends are less likely to be bullied.
- Rather than provide advice or solutions to everyday problems, encourage your child and help him or her find new alternatives and solutions.
- Help your child practice skills such as *cooling down*, *acting confident*, *negotiating*, *listening actively to others*, and using *I messages* when resolving problems with siblings or others at home.
- Praise your child for his or her efforts to resolve problems. Focus on the positive things your child does. Provide opportunities for your child to make appropriate choices and help turn mistakes into positive learning experiences.
- If your child is bullying others, explain to him or her why this behavior is not acceptable, establish rules and consequences and supervise your child's activities outside of school.